

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for anonymizing samples for use in research and development activities, the method comprising:
  - 5 (a) collecting one or more samples from a subject by an investigator site;
  - (b) providing a sample to a researcher by the investigator site, wherein the sample is associated with a first code;
  - (c) providing personal information to a third party by the investigator site, wherein the personal information is sufficient to link the subject with the one or more samples; and
  - 10 (d) providing a second code to the researcher by the third party.
2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the method comprises the additional step of the destruction of the personal information.
3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the samples are to be used in a longitudinal study.
- 15 4. A method for anonymizing samples for use in research and development activities, the method comprising:
  - (a) collecting from a subject by an investigator site:
    - (i) a sample; and
    - 20 (ii) sample information;
  - (b) providing to a third party by the investigator site:
    - (i) the sample information of (a)(ii); and
    - (ii) personal information sufficient to link the subject of (a) with the sample of (a)(i) and the sample information of (a)(ii);

- (c) providing the sample of (a)(i) to a researcher by the investigator site, wherein the sample is associated with a first code; and
- (d) providing to the researcher by the third party the sample information of (a)(ii), wherein the sample information is associated with a second code.

5     5.     The method of Claim 4, further comprising the steps of:

- (e) providing to the third party by the researcher:
  - (i) the first code; and
  - (ii) a request for one or more samples of the subject associated with the first code; and
- 10     (f) taking a sample from the subject by the third party, wherein the sample is associated with the first code of (e), and providing the sample to the researcher.

6.     The method of Claim 4, further comprising the steps of:

- (e) providing to the third party by the researcher:
  - 15     (i) the second code; and
  - (ii) a request for one or more samples of the subject associated with the second code; and
- 20     (f) taking a sample from the subject associated with the second code of (e), wherein the sample is taken by the third party and provided to the researcher.

7.     A method for anonymizing samples for use in research and development activities, the method comprising:

- (a) providing a request for a sample by a researcher to a third party;
- 25     (b) soliciting the sample from one or more investigator sites wherein the soliciting is done by the third party;

- (c) collecting of a sample, sample information, and personal information by the investigator sites;
- (d) submitting the sample, sample information and personal information by the investigator site to the third party, wherein the sample, sample information and personal information are coded with a first code;
- (e) associating a second code with the sample, sample information and personal information, wherein the associating is done by the third party;
- (f) submitting the sample and sample information to the researcher by the third party; and
- (g) storing of the personal information by the third party.
8. The method of Claim 7, wherein the first code is provided by the researcher.
9. The method of Claim 7, wherein the first code is provided by the third party.